

COMMERCIAL AVIATION

— AIRLINES — AIRPORTS —



UBIQUITOUS: A D.H. Dragon Rapide, used by Canadian Airways on the daily Seattle-Vancouver service, parked in front of the administration building, Boeing Field, Seattle, Wash. An interesting feature of this Rapide is the increased fin area necessary when floats are fitted. The other machines will be recognised as a Lockheed Electra 10A of Northwest Airlines and a Boeing 247D of United Air Lines.

THE WEEK AT CROYDON

Who Will Fly the First? : Another Charter Venture : Safety Last : A Mysterious Trip

NOW that the Empire flying boats have been launched there is considerable speculation here about the pilots who will first fly them for Imperial Airways. Major Brackley will doubtless be the first, but he, as Air Superintendent, always makes first tests of the company's aircraft and has given the once over to a large number of types before they have actually been handed over.

People are saying that Captains Wilcockson, Cummings or Powell are amongst those most likely to fly the boats, for all three recently sat for the first-class navigator's examination and none of them is specifically allocated to any particular route. They say that the first boat launched surprised everyone with its speed and one hears that a photographer in a Gull flying out was unable to catch it. The fact that these boats are actually ready brings it home to people that Croydon will no longer be the home of all Imperial pilots working to and from England and enquiries are already being made about dwelling places adjacent to Langstone Harbour.

Another Home

The old order changeth, for up to now pilots home from the East have always regarded Croydon as "home" and tended to gravitate towards it for a yarn with old pals and to astonish the natives with thrilling tales.

One of the oldest air taxi pilots at Croydon, Mr. "Timber" Woods, has just set up shop for himself. He has chosen a name for his enterprise which many will covet and which, quite surprisingly, has not been previously registered. It is Croydon Airways, Ltd. "Timber" has just taken delivery of a D.H. 90 (Dragonfly) and has, besides, a Puss Moth and a Moth. There seems to be plenty of room for such ventures at present. Apart from special charter work there is also considerable activity in the Army co-operation business, one Croydon company alone being asked to supply eight machines, for sound location practice, one afternoon last week. After the really rather comic episode recently, when some grave and reverent but

scarcely up-to-date signor utterly refused to consider sending valuable pictures by air to an exhibition in Holland—in spite of the lower insurance rate and of the fact that air transport was safe enough for H.R.H. the Duke of Kent—it is interesting to note that an extremely valuable consignment of antiques came in from Holland last week, including a 15th century wooden portrait head valued at close on £1,500. Apropos of being aghast at the idea of sending pictures by air, I wonder if the picture gallery official in question realises that there is a regular traffic in Dutch old masters. London picture dealers prefer this method of transport for reasons of safety, of the saving of packing costs.

Olley Air Service started this season's London-Deauville service last Saturday, when there were full loads and there was scarcely a name on the passenger list which was not in Debrett. Very gratifying, but I'd just as soon have self-made passengers provided they paid cash and did not weigh more! Olley's also sent off a machine, piloted by Capt. Bebb, on Saturday morning to the Canary Isles on some mysterious mission. Perhaps it is to fetch a canary back for Capt. Olley, who is not to be outdone by Major Brackley, who recently brought some rare birds home from Australia.

Surrey Flying Services were busy over the week-end, when Mr. Joe Chamberlain was seen organising parties which totalled some 300. Amongst others, there was a party of ninety-two from the Women's Civil Servants' Association, who, in spite of the rain, or perhaps because of Mr. Chamberlain's persuasive charm, seemed to enjoy their visit and flight.

A. VIATOR.

A Matter of Dimensions

IN the Air Ministry Notice to Airmen No. 94 of this year, the dimensions of Gatwick Airport were incorrectly given. These should be: N.-S., 1,125 yd.; N.E.-S.W., 1,120 yd.; E.-W., 1,212 yd.; and S.E.-N.W., 1,333 yd.